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SUBJECT: NOAA SCIENCE FELLOW TRAINS INDONESIAN MEDIA

¶1. Embassy Jakarta's Science Fellow conducted three media training events in Jakarta in late June to early July. Dr. Mary Baker of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration used the events to teach reporters, editors, and managers about coral issues in Indonesia: what is coral, why it is important, what threats to coral are, and what can be done about threats. Discussions covered wide ranging topics from the use of seaweed as biofuels to why urban poor should care about coral. A PowerPoint file, frequently asked questions, and "things you can do" document was provided in English and Indonesian, and is available for future trainings.

¶2. On June 24, Embassy Jakarta arranged for Dr. Baker to train 15-20 reporters at ANTV, a major national television station based in Jakarta. Reporters were highly interested in whether the Government of Indonesia (GOI) would take action to address threats, especially illegal fishing using explosives and cyanide. They raised thoughtful questions about how to get the public to care about the environment, given the other more pressing socioeconomic circumstances in their daily lives.

¶3. The second training session was on June 27 for five reporters at Suara Pembaruan, a national daily newspaper. Reporters had many questions on the relative status of coral health between Indonesia, the Philippines, and the U.S.A. They were curious about research on the use of seaweed as a biofuel. They also asked about effects of earthquakes on coral.

¶4. The third training session was for seven reporters at Koran Tempo, another national daily newspaper, on July 1. Reporters wanted more information about illegal reef fishing using explosives and cyanide. They discussed reporting techniques, including evaluating multiple perspectives and methods to identify spurious research claims.

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